

Original KDB CC- Gila Butte 7/17

July 12, 1995

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Stones River National Battlefield
3501 Old Nashville Hwy.
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129

RECEIVED
STONES RIVER
NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

JUL 17 '95

Attention: Regina Forsythe
REF. K14

Sept. 7/17
Chief Ranger
Staff Ranger

Dear Ms. Forsythe:

Thank you so much for the copies of the missing pages from the 44th Indiana history and copies of your brochures.

I think I may have mentioned to you that I found the original book, written by John H. Rerick, M.D., who was the assistant surgeon with the 44th. It was in a used book store in Elkhart, In. in the "rare book section." They wanted \$225 for it, which I felt we couldn't afford.

After writing you for the brochures, Father's Day came and my son got it for me! I'm enclosing copies of a picture of Col Hugh B. Reed who commanded the Regiment and a picture of John H. Rerick who wrote the book. Also, pages 78 through 84 relating to Stones River. Maybe you will find these helpful?

I'm also enclosing copies of Daniel W. Thompson's letter home after he enlisted (Dec. 9, 1861), his April 13 or 15, 1862 letter following Shiloh, his Nov. 10, 1863 letter describing life in Chattanooga following the battle at Chickamauga. His Jan. 6, 1864 letter written during the 44th Indiana duties at Chattanooga mentions he has a furlough coming and then his Nov. 22, 1864 letter indicates he didn't get it "because of his political sentiment." The state of Indiana didn't provide for absentee ballots and those soldiers who would vote Republican were sent home to "swell" the Republican votes. Apparently, he was a Democrat!

There is to be a Thompson reunion in August and I am anxious to see if there are other letters that I am unaware of, especially those that might relate to battles such as Stones River. If I find any, I'll send you copies. I have now found the cemetery he was buried in, his wife's parents stone, and the stone marker still legible for his mother, Catharine Thompson -- all in the same cemetery.

I've tried to copy in my writing, the letters he wrote so you'll find both enclosed. I'm putting together an album of all this for my son. May I bore you further with a few comments regarding the trip my wife and I made following the battles in which he participated?

At Ft. Donelson, the Park had an original of the same book that my son got me. So the only three I know of at this time are in the library at Ft. Wayne, In., at Ft. Donelson, and mine. Maybe you know of another? We took pictures of the "Surrender House" and near this location the 44th Indiana was one of the first Regiments to accept the Confederate stacked arms. Col. Reed mentions that General Grant rode by and motioned him to follow. He wasn't sure he or the whole Regiment was to follow, so they all went.

At Shiloh, we were able to "follow" Daniel Thompson through the Peach Orchard, at the left of the famous "Hornets Nest", and the point near the "Bloody Pond" where the 44th charged the Confederates late on the first day. Here, Confederate General Albert Sydney Johnston was killed. During the charge, Official Records indicate that as many as 7 men in the 44th took up the Regimental Flag as the holder was hit. The flag is in the Indiana State Library in Indianapolis, and hopefully I will be able to see and photograph it next Monday, to add to the Album.

At Chickamauga we again "followed" his action at various spots along the Lafayette Road, including Brotherton Field -- where on the second day, the Confederate breakthrough came. Then, the 44th was one of the Regiments that gathered on Snodgrass hill and stood off repeated charges until night fell. It was this action that saved Chattanooga from falling to the Confederacy and where General Thomas earned the title of "The Rock of Chickamauga." We walked along the ridge following the 44th markers and at sunset, saw our first meadowlark -- sitting on the 44th marker and singing. There was no one around and the beauty and serenity of the moment - in contrast to what Daniel Thompson experienced -- was very emotional for me.

We were able to follow the action at Shiloh and Chickamauga in detail because I luckily found large old maps drawn by Engineers and showing positions of the Union/Confederate Regiments and Brigades at various hours of the action. I think it was drawn up about 1900 after consultation with those who were at these two battles. And, in a used book store in Chattanooga I found "War of the Rebellion, Official Reports of the Union and Confederate Armies" with all the battle reports made by commanders of the Regiments, Brigades, Divisions, and Corps. It was published in 1880, and I got it for just \$25. It covered the action at Shiloh and through the siege of Corinth. How I wish I could get a copy covering the other battles he was in, including Stones River. You can follow the individual actions from both the North/South view.

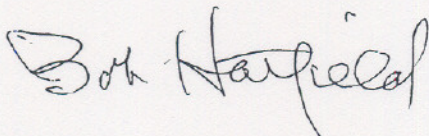
Well, I've bored you enough. But I figure anyone who would work at a National Battlefield would be a fellow "bore-er"! Again, thanks for spending time with us. I hope to come again as I now have maps and a better perspective of Stones River. For example, Pyffe's Brigade, including Daniel W. Thompson in the 44th, was part of the Division driven from the east side of Stones River back to the west side and then participated in the pursuit of the Confederates after they were pounded by Mendenhall's massed cannon. It was virtually

the last action of the battle. I took photos of the marker reading "ARTILLERY SAVES THE DAY" - near McFadden's Ford -- as well as the large monument on the hill, and didn't realize at the time that the 44th was there!

Regina, note in his first letter after enlisting he considered his first duty to God, second to country, and third to parents. His parents may have been pacifists and apparently taught him "the values" that so many politicians today are talking about. The soldier friend from another company who died at Camp Balis in Evansville was most likely "David Wert" in Company E, as surgeon Rerick describes this in the 44th history stating that "he died strong in the Christian faith" and gives his name. It makes sense, then, why they became friends because they undoubtedly shared the same values. I don't remember my Grandmother Hatfield, whose father was Daniel W. Thompson, ever speaking about him. How I wish I could talk to her now and ask questions! It was Grandmother Hatfield who gave me his original letter and the original envelope.

Hope you are having a good summer and making progress on the data base.

Sincerely,



Robert T. Hatfield
1827 E. McKinley
Mishawaka, In. 46545



Daniel W. Thompson wrote this letter Dec. 9, 1861, after enlisting in the Indiana 44th Regiment, Company B. He was eighteen years old.

The text, in my writing, is on the following three pages. Daniel W. would be my grandmother Elnora Hatfield's father -- Thomas Neal Hatfield's great, great grandfather.

There are "copies" of several other letters he wrote during the Civil War -- the text of each in my handwriting, followed by the actual "copy." He fought in the following major battles, in addition to many skirmishes:

Ft. Donelson, Tn.	Feb. 14-15, 1862
Shiloh, Tn.	Apr. 6-7, 1862
Corinth, Miss. (seige)	Apr. 22-Jn. 10, 1862
Perryville, Ky.	Oct. 8, 1862
Stones River, Tn.	Dec. 31, 1862-Jn 1, 2 1863
Chickamauga, Ga.	Sept. 18-19-20, 1863
Missionary Ridge, Tn.	Sept. 22, 1863
Missionary Ridge, Tn.	Nov. 25, 1863

December 9th (1861)

Camp Balis evensville Ind

Dear mother and friends in general. I embrace this opportunity to write a few lines to you perhaps for your own gratification as well as my own. I am reasonably and trust when these lines shall have reached their destination will find you all equally fortunate. You have doubtless long since learned that I have enlisted and gone into the army. I am well aware that it was always against your will that I should enlist but I considered it to be my second duty for my first duty I owe to my creator my second duty to my country and third duty to my parents. I consider that it is the duty of every person that is able to shoulder a gun to go and fight for his country. I like camp life full as well as I expected but there is many things connected with it that I don't like one is bad company there is some pretty bad boys some of whom when they were yet at home and in the society of friends and relatives had a good reputation but they are become hard customers. They have not got that firmness which they should possess. It is altogether unnecessary to miss behave more in the army than when at home. I don't think that this war is calculated to demoralize any one but such is the fate of many. I hope you will

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entertain no such fears on my part for should I remain in the army 20 years my reputation shall remain the same. I have no inclination at all to engage in any bad conduct those principles which you taught me in my early life shall preserve my character whithersoever my lot may be cast. I always did despise evil conduct and since I see so much of it I hate it worse than ever so I do hope you will not be uneasy with regard to this matter my career as a soldier is likely to be a hard and dangerous one yet I feel perfectly content and believe I did right. I will endeavor to not expose my self any more than necessary. We paid the last respect to one of our soldiers this morning by consigning him to the tomb a young man of whom I was pretty well acquainted. But members of different companies we spent many hours together since we enlisted. he got the Measles and caught cold which proved fatal, we were not permitted to go into the hospital at all they have it guarded all the time but when I herd of my young man being expected to recover I went to the colonel and there I got permission to visit him when he saw me he seemed revived and

NOTE: David Wert, Co. E, dies in the Regimental Hospital, from measles. Most likely this was Daniel W. Thompson's friend and they may have struck up the friendship from a common faith. "He died with strong confidence in the Christian faith, and was buried with military honors in the city cemetery, all the officers of the Regiment, and nearly all the soldiers, attending." (Forth-Fourth Indiana Voluntary Infantry - History of Its Services - John H. Rerick, M.D. Page 21)

cheered up he lamented much about home if he could only be at home with his parents he thought that he would get better and I have no doubt but that he would. although the sick are well taken care of one of the best physicians that could be procured, and the kind citizens do every thing that lay in their power to make as comfortable but I was not present long ere I saw that death had taken place and all hopes of recovery frustrated. I would remain no longer I bid him farewell for the last time and returned to my quarters but such is our fate. there is about fifty in the hospital sick some of will never recover. I must close for the drum beats the call for battalion drill and I must fall in to ranks. Direct your to

D. W. Thompson 44th regiment - Ind. Vol
in care of Capt Murray

~~Daniel W. Thompson enlisted in the Indiana 44th Regiment, Company B, in Ft. Wayne on Nov. 22, 1861. He is listed by the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana as the 226th enlistee in Indiana. He was mustered out on Sept. 14, 1865 as a Sergeant.~~



PROTECT IT!

into the hospital all they have it - guarded: all the time but when I heard of my young not being expected to recover I went to the colonel and there I got permission to visit him. When he saw me he seemed revived and cheered up he lamented much about home if he could only be at home with his parents he thought that he would get better and I have no doubt but that he would. although the sick are well taken care of one of the best physicians that could be procured, and the kind citizens do every thing that lay in their power to make us comfortable but I was not present long ere I saw that death had taken place and all hopes of recovery frustrated. I could remain no longer I bid him farewell for the last time and returned to my quarters but such is our fate. there is about fifty in the hospital sick some of will never recover. I must close for the drama the call for battalion drill and I must fall into ranks. Direct your to D. W. Thompson 44th Regiment - Ind. vol. in care of Capt. Murray

December 9th

Camp Bakersville Ind
Dear mother and friends
in general. I embrace this opportunity to write a few lines to you perhaps for your own gratification as well as my own. I am reasonably and trust when these lines shall have reached their destination will find you all equally fortunate. You have doubtless long since learned that I have enlisted and gone into the army. I am well aware that it is always against your will that I should enlist but I considered it to be my second duty for my first duty I owe to my creator my second duty to my country and third duty to my parents. I consider that it is the duty of every person that is able to

shoulder a gun to go and fight
for his country. I like camp life
full as well as I expected, but there is
many things connected with it that
I don't like one is bad company
there is some pretty bad boys some of
whom when they were yet at home were
in the society of friends and relatives
had a good reputation but they are
become bad customers, they have not
got that firmness which they
should possess. It is altogether
unnecessary to misbehave more
in the army than when at home
I don't think that this was is
calculated to demoralize any one
but such is the fate of many
I hope you will entertain no
such fears on my part for should
I remain in the army 20 years my
reputation shall remain the same
I have no inclination at all
to engage in any bad conduct. He are not permitted to go

those principles which you taught
me in my early life shall preserve
my character, whatever my lot
may be cast. I always did despise
evil conduct and since I see so
much of it I hate it worse
than ever, so I do hope you will
not be uneasy with regard to
this matter, my career as a soldier
is likely to be a hard and danger-
ous one, yet I feel perfectly content-
and believe I did right. I will
endeavor to not expose myself any
more than necessary. We paid the
last respect to one of our soldiers
this morning by consigning
him to the tomb, a young man
of whom I was pretty well acquain-
ted. But members of different compa-
nies spent many hours together since
we enlisted. he got the Measles and
caught cold which proved fatal
He are not permitted to go

April 13th (15?) 1862

Dear Friends,

I am reasonable well at present and trying to enjoy my self as well as existing circumstances will permit admit I suppose that you have heard ere this time of our great battle at this place which took place on Sunday morning the 6th and ended on Monday. it was an awful battle horrible beyond discription The enemy attacked us early on Sunday morning which was altogether unlooked for. I do not know how many was killed and wounded on our side but it is frightful. our company sustained a loss of eighteen killed and wounded including our captain who was wounded on Sunday and died on Tuesday. We all mourn his loss for he was a good captain and a brave man. yet we know he fell in a glorious cause but oh how many of our noble hearted men must fall in this war. it is horrible to think about when you write tell me how you like your new home and all about it also if you can get a Ft Wayne paper that gives a full account of the 44th Regt (regiment) in this battle I wish you would send it to me. I want to see whether the account is correct or not, I suppose since the regiment was made up at Ft Wayne it will give a full account. I will not write much for this time, merely to let you know that I am numbed with the living for which I thank the good Lord for bringing me

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through another very hard battle without
even receiving a wound. Now write soon
and tell me all the news, Direct your
letter to D. W. Thompson

Company B
44th Regt - Ind vol
Pittsburgh Landing
Tennessee

My love to you all.

D. Thompson

~~Notes~~ Battle of Shiloh (Pittsburgh Landing)
was fought April 6, 7, 1862. Of
the Indiana Regiments involved,
the 44th was hardest hit -
24 killed and 168 wounded. Indiana
Governor Morton sent 30 surgeons.
The Confederate General Albert
Sydney Johnston was killed in
front of the Indiana 44th: did
Daniel W. Thompson fire the shot!?

Apr 15 - 62

Camp of the 4th New York
Pittsburg Landing

Dear Friends,

I am ~~glad~~ ^{glad} to be at present and trying to enjoy my self as well as existing circumstances will admit. I suppose that you have heard ere this time of our great battle at this place which took place on Sunday morning the 6th and ended on Monday it was an awful battle horrible beyond description the enemy attacked us early on Sunday morning which was altogether unlooked for. I do not know how many was killed and around on our side but it is frightful our loss, my sustenance

a loss of eighteen killed and
wounded (including) our
captain who was wounded
on Sunday and died
on Tuesday. We all mourn
his loss for he was a good
captain and a brave
man. Yet I do know he
felt it a glorious career
but oh how many of
our noble hearted men must
fall in this war. It is
horrible to think about it.
When you write tell me
how you like your new
home and all about it.
Also if you can get a
bit of newspaper that gives
a full account of the
44th regt in this battle I
wash you I could send it
to me. I want to see
whether the account is correct.

or not; I suppose since the
regiment was made up at
Gettysburg that it will
give a full account. I will
not write much for this
time, merely to let you
know that I am remembered
with the living for which I
thank the good Lord for
bringing me through another
very hard battle without receiving
even a wound. Now write
soon and tell me all
the news, Direct your
letter to S. W. Thompson.

Company B.

44th regt - Ind. vol
Gettysburg Landing
Genesee

My love to you all.

S. W. Thompson

Chattanooga Tennessee
Nov. 10th 1863

Dear Friends. I received your letter yesterday dated March (?). I was glad to hear from you, that you was well (etc?). I am well and in good spirits. also the general health of my company is good and all seem in the best of spirits not withstanding the short rations which we have necessarily subsisted upon from a (——?) of the proper means for its shipment to this place. however we look forward for a better day to come and bear all hardships and privation without a single complaint as every American Soldier and Citizen should do who are fighting for a great and noble cause. I have no very exciting news to tell you fighting is going on almost every day to a certain extent, however no general engagement has taken place since the battle. the rebels are in force before Chattanooga ever since the battle and the lines of the two armies in some places are but a few rods apart. we converse together exchange papers. and have made an agreement between each other that neither party will fire on the other unless a general

advance is made. This is the best policy since
frickle fighting never amounts to anything and
only kills and wounds men for nothing. Since
the battle the army has been heavily
reinforced (two corps?) from the army of the
(Potomac?) Commanded by Generals Howard
and Slocum and both Corps under the
immediate command of Gen Joe Hooker. Also
two corps from Grant's army. General U.S.
Grant is here and commands the whole
army. General Howard commands the army
of the Cumberland and General Rosecrans has
gone home to (?) - his health which
was very poor at the time the battle was
fought. He is soon expected to return and
take command of his department. We expect
sooner or later to have another severe battle
but how soon I cannot tell but
certainly the two armies cannot lay so close
together much longer without a battle being
fought. The battle pending will I believe
in a great measure decide the fate of the
war. However should it go against (?) the
war will be prolonged to time indefinite.
(next line is blurred) I hope by the
assistance of kind Providence we will do. I
believe that peace will soon be made so our

once happy, but now distracted Country, So
may the God who now rules all things best,
be with us, watch over us, direct and keep us
from all evil whatsoever and grant us a
glorious victory (several words obliterated) who
seek to destroy the best Government ever
devised by man. But with the fact "And yet,
and yet, we cannot forget that many brave
boys must fall. I close my letter for the
present. Write as soon as convenient and
direct as before. I will also copy the
School (Song?) for Sarrah.

Daniel W. Thompson

Nov. 23, 1863. Thomas takes Orchard Knob in
front of Missionary Ridge. Nov. 24, 1863. Hooker's
troops take Lookout Mountain. Sherman attacks
opposite end of Missionary Ridge. Nov. 25, 1863.
Sherman's attack on Bragg's right is halted.
Thomas' Army of the Cumberland charges up
Missionary Ridge and Routes the Confederates.
Indiana Regiments involved, including
Daniel W. Thompson in the 44th, were:
4, 9, 10, 12, 15, 22, 32, 35, 38, 40, 42, 44, 55,
57, 58, 59, 68, 74, 75, 82, 83, 86, 87, 88, 97,
99, 101.

a battle being fought the
battle pending will I believe
in a usual measure decide the
fates of the war however I have
it - 98 - against me the war will
be prolonged to time indefinite
I have no doubt of it

[illegible]

for a just and noble cause.

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of his department. (We expect)

or later to have another

General. I will not know soon if

cannot tell but certainly the

two armies cannot lay so close

together much longer without

Camp Chattanooga Tennessee Jan. 6th 1864

Dear friends,

I received your letter yesterday and was glad to hear from you again. I am also well and in the best of spirits. Nothing of an ——— character has transpired since my last letter the weather has been tolerable cold considering the altitude in which we are but today the Sun shines forth in all its splendor and is as warm as in the (merry?) month of May. day before yesterday the cars ran through to Chattanooga for the first time since its occupation by the union forces it was considered as a welcome visitor by the soldiers for by them they expect to have a greater supply of provisions. Steam boats also run from Bridgeport to this place. News from the North is that the weather is very cold. here we have ———? had snow enough to be called snow the ground scarcely covered. I will write but a short letter this time as I expect soon to see you all personally. Our regiment has gone into the (Veteran Service?) consequently as we are to return home and receive a furlow not less than thirty days. We have been mustered and payed several days ago and are now waiting orders from Nashville so know when to start on our way homeward bound the river (Ohio) being frozen over and thereby ——— steamboat

FF

navigation disposed with for the present and
from the effects there of. Nashville has
become (blockaded?) _____ regiments
going home so that we wait for the present
rush to get cleared away so that we can
get transported over the road. if you and
can live (—?) my shirts done up when
I come it much oblige me. I would
like to go to Pennsylvania but have not
(truly?) determined whether I will or
will not. When the regiment will be
disbanded I am not prepared to say.
however either at Ft. Wayne or
Kendleville or Indianapolis. if it should
be at Fort Wayne and John can
ascertain what day it reaches there I
wish he could make it just to be in
town as I may have some trouble to
find where you live. How soon we will
start from here is yet to be determine
but I think in a few days.

Should any letters come to the
(post office?) (Randall?) addressed to me
get them and (them?) till I come home.

You need not answer this

Yours resp—
Daniel Thompson

than till I come now -
you need not answer this.

Yours! Robt. T.

Samuel Thorpe

HEAD QUARTERS,

Co. ... 4th Reg. Indiana Vol. Inf.
Camp Chattanooga Tenn. Feb 6 1864.

Dear friends

I received your letter yesterday and was glad to hear from you again. I am also well and in the best of spirits. Nothing is in going. Character has transferred himself last winter. He never has been unable cold catching. I include in mine are ... but today

the sun shines forth in all its power and is as warm as in the morn. month. It may day before yesterday the cars have through to Chattanooga for the first time since its occupation by the Union. As it was considered as a welcome visitor by the soldiers for by them

They expect to have a quarter supply, we wait for the present & such to go
of subsistence. These boats also run
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News from the North is that the
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marks had snow enough to be called it
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I will write but a short letter
this time as I expect soon to see
you all personally. Our regiment has
gone into the Indian Marine Corps
recently we are to return here and
receive a fullers post. Less than
thirty days we have been marched
and fought several days ago. and are
now waiting orders from Nashville
to know when to start on our way
homeward to the iron (Ohio) hills.
I have over and there by riding trains
but conversation is piled with
for the present and from the effects
there of Nashville has become blackish

Nathan Reynolds going home so that
we wait for the present & such to go
clashed away so that we can get
kindred after the road.
if you and can have been
my wife's home up when I came
it much galled me I would like
to go to Springfield but have
not fully determined whether I will
or will not. before the regiment
be disbanded I am not prepared
to say however either at all way on
Hendricks or Indianapolis. if it should
be at Fort Wayne and John can
ascertain what day it reaches there. I will
be could make it just to be in
Brown as I may have some trouble to
find before you leave. Have done
we will start from here as by it
to C. I think but I think in a
few days
should any letters come to the post
(Nashville) addressed to me get them and

Chattanooga Tenn Nov 22 1864

Mother and Sister

I seat myself to write you a short letter. I am well and hope these lines may find you well and in as good circumstances as possible. For the past two weeks I have been detached from the regiment and with a detachment of thirty men have been guarding cattle near Ross Hill Ga. But I am now relieved from that, and am with the regiment at Chattanooga. The weather here is very disagreeable. It rained three days and nights in Succession which made it very muddy almost impossible to do military duty. However yesterday morning it began to grow cold and around evening it snowed a little but just enough to call snow. This morning the ground was froze very hard and we could walk on top the mud. I delayed writing to you from the fact that I had expected to get a furlow this fall and return home for the election. But I failed to get a furlow from (the?) consequence of my political Sentiment. I presume injustice was done many Soldiers in regard to this election. But the election is over and I presume Lincoln relected President which tells us that the war will yet be prolonged to time.

indefinite and that the long looked for day of peace is yet in the far future. Tell me in your answer to this where John Chace is, and give me his address. The last letter I wrote to him he did not answer he was then at Murfreesboro. He promised to send the money due me by letter but if he sent it it was not received. Tell me how you like to live in the neighborhood where you now live. I have had no letter from Grandfather folks since I was at home. I see George Althous occasionally he is still at this place. I will close my letter for the present. write me soon.

D. W. Thompson

~~NOTE~~ He got a furlow Jan 6, 1864 (see comment under "Report of the Adjutant General"). From his comments in this letter, ~~he felt he was denied a furlow at this time - when he would have voted for President - and must have been a Democrat.~~

Chattanooga Tenn Nov 22 64.
Mother & Sister

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future. Tell me in your answer to which
John Chase is, and give me his address. The
last letter I wrote to him he did not answer
he was then at Newfreestone. He promised to
send the money due me by letter, but if he
sent it it was not received.

tell me how you like to live in the
neighborhood where you now live.

I have had no letter from Grand fathers
folks since I was at home. I see Burger
although occasionally he is still at.

this place. I will close my letter
for the present write me soon.

W. Thompson